

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 A method for providing a mailing list test service involving a plurality of mailing
2 lists, each mailing list including information about a plurality of list members, the
3 method comprising:

4 (a) sending, for each mailing list in the plurality of mailing lists, an e-
5 mail message to each of a subset of list members;

6 (b) receiving at least one response based on an associated e-mail
7 message sent in (a), each received response being associated with a list
8 member from a subset of list members; and

9 (c) selecting for use, based on the at least one response received in (b),
10 one of the plurality of mailing lists.

11 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

12 (d) selling the mailing list selected in (c).

13 3. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

14 (d) renting to another the mailing list selected in (c).

15 4. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

16 (d) mailing information to list members of the mailing list selected in
17 (c).

18 5. The method of claim 1, wherein said sending an e-mail message in (a) includes:

19 (i) sending, for a first mailing list in the plurality of
20 mailing lists, a first e-mail message to a first member of the subset;
21 and

22 (ii) sending, for the first mailing list in the plurality of
23 mailing lists, a second e-mail message to a second member of the
24 subset

25 wherein the first e-mail message includes content different from the second e-mail
26 message.

6. The method of claim 5, further comprising:

(d) storing the at least one response received in (b).

7. The method of claim 5, wherein at least one of the plurality of mailing lists contains a first set of mailing list content, and another of the plurality of mailing lists contains a second set of content, and wherein said selecting in (c) includes selecting at least one of the plurality of mailing lists based on mailing list content included in the e-mail messages sent in (a).

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one response received in (b) includes, for each received response, a test identifier and a member identifier, and comprising the further steps of:

(d) retrieving a test record from a test database based on the received test identifier; and

(e) updating the retrieved test record to disclose, based on the received member identifier, that a response was received from a member associated with the member identifier.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein the at least one response received in (b) further includes a question identifier and an answer identifier.

10. The method of claim 7, wherein said selecting one of the plurality of mailing lists includes selecting based on the received question identifier and the received answer identifier.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein said selecting one of the plurality of mailing lists includes:

(i) determining a response rate of each of the plurality of mailing lists; and

(ii) selecting the mailing list that has a response rate higher than the response rates of the other mailing lists.

1 12. The method of claim 1, wherein said receiving at least one response based on an
2 associated e-mail message includes detecting a response to the e-mail message
3 based on the use of a uniform resource locator embedded in the e-mail message.

1 13. The method of claim 1, wherein a list member associated with a received response
2 is compensated for the response.

1 14. An apparatus for providing a mailing list test service, comprising:
2 (a) a processor;
3 (b) a database including a plurality of mailing lists, each mailing list
4 having information about a plurality of list members;
5 (c) a port coupled to said processor; and
6 (d) a memory including a database, said memory coupled to said
7 processor, and said memory storing instructions adapted to be executed by
8 said processor, the instructions including:
9 (i) sending, for each mailing list in the plurality of
10 mailing lists, an e-mail message to each of a subset of list members;
11 (ii) receiving at least one response based on an
12 associated e-mail message sent in (a), each received response being
13 associated with a list member from a subset of list members; and
14 (iii) selecting for use, based on the at least one response
15 received in (b), one of the plurality of mailing lists.

1 15. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein said memory stores further instructions
2 adapted to be executed by said processor, said further instructions including:
3 (iv) selling the mailing list selected in (iii).

1 16. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein said memory stores further instructions
2 adapted to be executed by said processor, said further instructions including:
3 (iv) renting to another the mailing list selected in (iii).

1 17. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein said memory stores further instructions

2 adapted to be executed by said processor, said further instructions including:

- 3 (iv) mailing information to members of the mailing list
4 selected in (iii).

1 18. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the instructions to send an e-mail message
2 include instructions adapted to be executed by a processor to:

3 send, for a first mailing list in the plurality of mailing lists, a first e-mail
4 message to a first member of the subset; and

5 send, for the first mailing list in the plurality of mailing lists, a second e-
6 mail message to a second member of the subset, wherein the first e-mail message
7 includes content different from the second e-mail message.

1 19. The apparatus of claim 18, said memory storing further instructions adapted to be
2 executed by said processor, the instructions including:

- 3 (iv) storing the at least one response received in (ii).

4 20. The apparatus of claim 18, wherein one of the plurality of mailing lists contains a
5 first set of mailing list content, and another of the plurality of mailing lists contains
6 a second set of mailing list content, and wherein selecting in (iii) includes selecting
7 one of the plurality of mailing lists based on mailing list content included in the e-
8 mail messages sent in (i).

1 21. The apparatus of claim 20, wherein selecting in (iii) further includes:

2 (i) determining a response rate of each of the plurality
3 of mailing lists; and

4 (ii) selecting a mailing list from the plurality of mailing
5 lists that has a response rate higher than the response rate of the
6 other mailing lists.

1 22. The apparatus of claim 13, said database including a mailing list database
2 containing a member identifier, a test database containing a test identifier, a
3 questions database, an answer database, and said memory storing further

4 instructions adapted to be executed on said processor, the further instructions
5 including:

6 (iv) retrieving a test record from the test database based
7 on a received test identifier; and

8 (v) marking the retrieved test record to disclose, based
9 on the member identifier, that a response was received from a list
10 member associated with the member identifier.

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1 23. The apparatus of claim 22, wherein the test database contains a question identifier
2 and an answer identifier.

1 24. The apparatus of claim 13, wherein instructions to select a mailing list from the
2 plurality of mailing lists include instructions to:

3 determine the response rate of each of the plurality of mailing lists; and
4 select the mailing list with the highest response rate.

5 25. The apparatus of claim 13, wherein said receiving at least one response based on
6 an associated e-mail message includes detecting a response to the e-mail message
7 based on the use of a URL embedded in the e-mail message.

8 26. The apparatus of claim 13, wherein a list member associated with a received
9 response is compensated for the response.

1 27. A medium storing instruction adapted to be executed by a processor to provide a
2 mailing list test service for a plurality of mailing lists, each mailing list including
3 information about a plurality of list members, said instructions comprising:

4 (a) sending, for each mailing list in the plurality of mailing lists, an e-
5 mail message to each of a subset of list members;

6 (b) receiving at least one response based on an associated e-mail
7 message sent in (a), each received response being associated with a list
8 member from a subset of list members; and

9 (c) selecting for use, based on the at least one response received in (b),

one of the plurality of mailing lists.

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28. The medium of claim 27 storing further instructions adapted to be executed by a processor, said further instructions comprising:

(d) selling the mailing list selected in (c).

29. The medium of claim 27 storing further instructions adapted to be executed by a processor, said further instructions comprising:

(d) renting to another the mailing list selected in (c).

30. The medium of claim 27 storing further instructions adapted to be executed by a processor, said further instructions comprising:

(d) mailing information to members of the mailing list selected in (c).

31. The medium of claim 27, wherein the instructions to send an e-mail message in (a) include further instructions adapted to be executed by a processor to:

(i) send, for a first mailing list in the plurality of mailing lists, a first e-mail message to a first member of the subset; and

(ii) send, for the first mailing list in the plurality of mailing lists, a second e-mail message to a second member of the subset,

wherein the first e-mail message includes content different from the second e-mail message.

32. The medium of claim 31, said medium storing further instructions adapted to be executed by a processor to store the at least one response received in (b).

33. The medium of claim 31, wherein one of the plurality of mailing lists contains a first set of mailing list content, and another of the plurality of mailing lists contains a second set of content, and wherein said selecting in (c) includes selecting one of the plurality of mailing lists based on mailing list content in the e-mail messages sent in (a).

1 34. The medium of claim 33, wherein said selecting in (c) further includes:
2 (i) determining a response rate of each of the plurality
3 of mailing lists; and
4 (ii) selecting the mailing list that has a response rate
5 higher than the response rate of the other mailing lists.

1 35. The medium of claim 27, wherein the response received in (b) includes, for each
2 received response, a test identifier and a member identifier, and wherein the
3 medium includes further instructions adapted to be executed by a processor, said
4 further instructions comprising:
5 (d) retrieving a test record from a test database based on the received
6 test identifier; and
7 (e) marking the retrieved test record to disclose, based on the received
8 member identifier, that a response was received from a member associated
9 with the member identifier.

1 36. The medium of claim 35, wherein said instructions to receive a response to the e-
2 mail message include instructions to:
3 (i) receive a question identifier; and
4 (ii) receive an answer identifier.

1 37. The medium of claim 36, wherein the selection in (c) includes selecting based on
2 the received question identifier and the received answer identifier.

1 38. The medium of claim 27, wherein said instructions to select a mailing list include
2 instructions to:
3 (i) determine the response rate of each of the plurality of
4 mailing lists; and
5 (ii) select the mailing list that has the highest response
6 rate.

1 39. A system for providing a mailing list test service involving a plurality of mailing

2 lists, each mailing list including information about a plurality of list members, the
3 system comprising:

- 4 (a) means for sending, for each mailing list in the plurality of mailing
5 lists, an e-mail message to each of a subset of list members;
6 (b) means for receiving at least one response based on an associated e-
7 mail message sent in (a), each received response being associated with a list
8 member from a subset of list members; and
9 (c) means for selecting for use, based on the at least one response
10 received in (b), one of the plurality of mailing lists.

1 40. The system of claim 39, further comprising:

- 2 (d) means for selling the mailing list selected in (c).

1 41. The system of claim 39, further comprising:

- 2 (d) means for renting to another the mailing list selected in (c).

1 42. The system of claim 39, further comprising:

- 2 (d) means for mailing information to list members of the mailing list
3 selected in (c).

1 43. The system of claim 39, wherein said means for sending an e-mail message in (a)
2 includes:

3 (i) means for sending, for a first mailing list in the
4 plurality of mailing lists, a first e-mail message to a first member of
5 the subset; and

6 (ii) means for sending, for the first mailing list in the
7 plurality of mailing lists, a second e-mail message to a second
8 member of the subset, wherein the first e-mail message includes
9 content different from the second e-mail message.

1 44. The system of claim 39, further comprising:

- 2 (d) means for storing the at least one response.

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1 45. The system of claim 44, wherein one of the plurality of mailing lists contains a first
2 set of mailing list content, and another of the plurality of mailing lists contains a
3 second set of mailing list content, and wherein said means for selecting includes
4 means for selecting one of the plurality of mailing lists based on mailing list
5 content included in sent computer based messages.

1 46. The system of claim 45, wherein said means for selecting further includes:
2 (i) means for determining a response rate of each of the
3 plurality of mailing lists; and
4 (ii) means for selecting the mailing list that has a
5 response rate higher than the response rate of the other mailing lists
6 of the plurality of mailing lists.

1 47. The system of claim 39, wherein the at least one response received in (b) includes,
2 for each received response, a test identifier and a member identifier, and further
3 comprising:
4 (d) means for retrieving a test record from a test database based on the
5 received test identifier; and
6 (e) means for marking the retrieved test record to disclose, based on the
7 received member identifier, that a response was received from a member
8 associated with the member identifier.

1 48. The system of claim 47, wherein the at least one response received in (b) further
2 includes a question identifier and an answer identifier.

1 49. The system of claim 48, wherein said means for selecting one of the plurality of
2 mailing lists includes means for selecting based on the received question identifier
3 and the received answer identifier.

1 50. The system of claim 49, wherein said means for selecting one of the plurality of
2 mailing lists includes:
3 (i) means for determining a response rate of each of the

4 *Amended*
5 plurality of mailing lists; and
6

(ii) means for selecting the mailing list that has the
highest response rate.

1 ~~51.~~ A method for creating a custom mailing list, comprising:

- 2 (a) receiving preselected criteria;
3 (b) sending an e-mail message to a plurality of recipients;
4 (c) receiving at least one response based on an associated e-mail
5 message, each received message being associated with one of the plurality
6 of recipients; and
7 (d) creating, based on the at least one response received in (c) and the
8 preselected criteria received in (a), a mailing list.

1 ~~52.~~ The method of claim 51, wherein the preselected criteria received in (a) includes a
2 response rate.

1 ~~53.~~ The method of claim 51, wherein the e-mail message sent in (b) is a telephone
2 message.

1 ~~54.~~ The method of claim 51, wherein the at least one response received in (c) includes
2 a test identifier and a member identifier.

1 ~~55.~~ The method of claim 51, wherein the at least one response received in (c) includes
2 a question identifier and an answer identifier.

1 ~~56.~~ A method for customizing message content, comprising:

- 2 (a) receiving list criteria;
3 (b) sending an e-mail message to a plurality of recipients;
4 (c) receiving at least one response based on an associated e-mail
5 message, each received message being associated with one of the plurality
6 of recipients; and

(d) choosing, for a mailing list, message content based on the at least one response received in (c), and the list criteria received in (a).

57. The method of claim 56, wherein the list criteria received in (a) includes a response rate.

58. The method of claim 56, wherein the at least one response received in (c) includes a test identifier and a member identifier.

59. The method of claim 56, wherein the at least one response received in (c) includes a question identifier and an answer identifier.

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